

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Original): A method for treating hepatic disease or improving liver function comprising administering to a subject in need thereof, who has not been hepatectomized, an effective amount of valine in the form of a composition which contains valine as an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids as an effective ingredient, and wherein said valine has a therapeutic effect on hepatic disease *per se*.

Claim 2 (Original): A method for improving liver function comprising administering to a subject in need thereof who has not been hepatectomized an effective amount of valine in the form of a food composition which contains valine as an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids as an active ingredient, and wherein said valine *per se* has an effect of improving, and does improve, the function of said liver.

Claim 3 (Original): The method according to claim 2 wherein the food composition is a functional food.

Claim 4 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein the hepatic disease is hepatitis.

Claim 5 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein the hepatic disease is hepatic insufficiency.

Claim 6 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein the hepatic disease is cirrhosis.

Claim 7 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein valine is L-valine.

Claim 8 (Original): The method according to claim 2 wherein valine is L-valine.

Claim 9 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein the administration is by injection.

Claim 10 (Original): The method according to claim 1 wherein the administration is by infusion.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 1 wherein the administration is by the oral route.

Claim 12 (Original): A kit for treating hepatic disease or improving liver function comprising an effective amount of valine in the form of a composition which contains valine as an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids as an active ingredient, and instructions for treating hepatic disease or improving the liver functions for a patient who has not been hepatectomized.

Claim 13 (Original): A kit for improving liver function comprising an effective amount of valine in the form

of a food composition which contains valine as an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids, and in which said valine has an effect of *per se* improving the function of the liver, and instructions for improving the liver function for a patient who has not been hepatectomized.

Claim 14 (Original): The kit according to claim 13 wherein the food composition is a functional food.

Claim 15 (Original): The kit according to claim 12, wherein the instructions are for hepatitis, hepatic insufficiency, or cirrhosis.

Claim 16 (Original): The kit according to claim 13 wherein the instructions are for hepatitis, hepatic insufficiency or cirrhosis.

Claim 17 (Original): The kit according to claim 14 wherein valine is L-valine.

Claim 18 (Original): The kit according to claim 15 wherein valine is L-valine.

Claim 19 (Original): The kit according to claim 12 wherein the composition is in a form for injection.

Claim 20 (Original): The kit according to claim 12 wherein the composition is an infusion preparation.

Claim 21 (Original): The kit according to claim 12 wherein the composition is an oral preparation.

Claim 22 (Original): A method for treating hepatic disease selected from the group consisting of acute hepatitis, chronic hepatitis, hepatic insufficiency, and cirrhosis comprising administering to a subject in need thereof an effective amount of valine.

Claim 23 (Original): The method according to claim 22 wherein the acute hepatitis and chronic hepatitis are caused by a hepatitis virus.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): A method for treating chronic hepatopathy or improving liver function comprising administering to a subject in need thereof, who has not been hepatectomized, an effective amount of valine in the form of a composition which contains valine as an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids as an active ingredient, and wherein said valine has a therapeutic effect on chronic hepatopathy *per se*.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): A kit for treating chronic hepatopathy or improving liver function comprising an effective amount of valine in the form of a composition which contains valine as an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids as an active ingredient,<sup>7</sup> and instructions for treating

chronic hepatopathy or improving the liver functions for a  
patient who has not been hepatectomized.